

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: August 7, 1998

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: ECN-4

SUBJECT: Supplemental Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIC, Project No. 9801800

to: Thomas C. McKinney – NEPA Compliance Officer

Proposed Action: John Day Watershed Restoration

Budget No.: F5018

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 4.2 Water Measuring Devices, 4.25 Consolidate/Replace Irrigation Diversion Dams

Location: Grant County, Oregon. John Day Basin.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO), Grant Soil and Water Conservation District, private landowners, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Water Resources, and Bureau of Reclamation.

Description of the Proposed Action: Continue ongoing implementation of the Upper John Day watershed restoration effort. Proposed projects contribute to beneficial cumulative effects from previous BPA funded restoration activities. Many are located within or are in close proximity to prior riparian corridor and instream enhancement project areas. The CTWSRO have been able to demonstrate, through monitoring, the immediate beneficial aspects associated with the proposed projects. Installing permanent diversions have immediate benefits to anadromous and resident fish migration. Return flow cooling projects have been shown to immediately cool irrigation returns significantly below river temperatures. The measurable benefits of these projects are anticipated to contribute towards overall basin restoration objectives.

The proposed projects would create a permanent, efficient, and low maintenance diversion system that maintains unrestricted fish passage at all river levels and reduces or eliminates annual impacts to aquatic and terrestrial resources. Eliminating the gravel diversion dam and dike would preclude annual reconstruction and allow restoration of stream channel and bank structure. Annual sediment inputs and streambed/streambank degradation that result from instream diversion reconstruction would be eliminated leading to additional channel stability. Eliminating scavenging of dike materials from the adjacent riverbank would allow recovery of riparian vegetation and function. Construction of a permanent diversion provides for diversion to legal rate and duty of all flow conditions.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by CTWSRO and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Section 7 consultation was conducted with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the requirements of the Endangered Species Act (Act). Of concern are the potential impacts from proposed project construction activities to bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), listed on June 10, 1998, as a threatened species under the Act. As a result, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) developed a biological assessment for these projects as they affect bull trout. The USFWS concurred on July 22, 1998, that these projects “are not likely to adversely affect” bull trout.

A Cultural Resources Survey of the 10 different project areas were conducted by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). One prehistoric site was discovered as well as potential historic ranch buildings in one project area (Lee Irrigation Reorganization). Based on the redesign, this project should be able to avoid the potential sites. SHPO concurred that the 10 projects will have “no affect” on sites on, or eligible for inclusion on, the National Register of Historic Places.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 7.8H.2, 7.10, and 10.2 of the Northwest Power Planning Council’s Fish and Wildlife Program. The attached Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and; 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Eric N. Powers

Eric N. Powers
Environmental Project Lead
Environment, Fish and Wildlife Group

Concur:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 8/8/98

Attachments:

NEPA Compliance Checklist
Cultural Resources Concurrence Letter from SHPO
USFWS Concurrence Letter on Bull Trout BA